

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER VII. THE HEIRESS AT HOME.

"MOGGGRIDGE'S" is not an establishment calculated to instil much respect for our inn-keeping faculties into the minds of our foreign visitors. It is one of those hotels, situated in the neighbourhood of the Adelphi, which advertise regularly in Bradshaw, describing themselves as equally contiguous to the City and the West End, the Bank of England and the parks, and which apparently placed great reliance in the fact of their having a night-porter in attendance; a dreary, dirty old house, with dim narrow staircases and black passages, in which the gas is constantly burning, and which lead to nowhere. Moggridge himself had long been dead, and the successive proprietors had put in a piece of new furniture here, and some fresh carpeting there, which stood out in relief against the original decorations, and only served to render them more dingy and forlorn. It was known as "a Yorkshire house," the first Moggridge having hailed from Bradford, and was frequented by clerical dignitaries from York; white-headed solicitors, who dressed in rusty black, carried their watches in their fobs, and consumed an immense quantity of snuff; fluffy mill-owners and agriculturists from Wakefield; and apple-faced, wiry squires from all portions of the county. Mr. Hillman, senior partner in the firm of Messrs. Hillman and Hicks, solicitors to the Middleham estate, had imbibed his first knowledge of the law in an attorney's office at Thirk, and still kept up his con-

nection with the northern county; and it was by his advice that Grace, on her first arrival in London, took up her quarters at this dismal old hostelry. The place, as might be expected, had not a brightening effect upon her spirits, and, for the first two or three days after her arrival, she fell into the depths of despair.

"It seems," she wrote to Anne, "as though I were doomed to be disappointed in all my anticipations. You will recollect the notions we had formed about our first sojourn in Paris, and what was the result? In a somewhat similarly enthusiastic spirit I had looked forward to my stay in London; and you may judge of my feelings when I tell you that I have spent the last two days in a large dark dining-room, furnished with hard, slippery, horse-hair chairs; a rickety sofa of the same material; a round mirror stuck high up on the wall; and an enormous mahogany sideboard, garnished with a set of cruets. There is a window which is supposed to look towards the Thames; but the panes are so dirty that one can see nothing through them, and I am only aware of the proximity of the river by hearing the puffing of the steamers. Mr. Hillman has been twice to see me—a kindly old gentleman, but evidently very much frightened of ladies. He sits on the edge of his chair, and, as he speaks, brings the tips of his fingers together, separates them, and brings them together again as though he were weaving a kind of mystic charm, reminding me of Vivien and Merlin—with a difference. He calls me 'madam,' and interlards his conversation with a vast amount of quaint phraseology; but as far as I can make out, the bank has been singularly prosperous since my poor uncle's death, and I am considerably richer than

I had anticipated. I have already explained to the old gentleman my determination to effect an immediate sale of Loddonford, at which he was very much astonished, not to say shocked. He represented that, owing to the improvements made in it, the estate had very much risen in value, and expressed his opinion that "a lady of my consideration," as he was pleased to phrase it, would do well to retain such a possession. I adhered to my decision; but nothing is to be finally settled until I have had an interview with Mr. Bence and Mr. Palmer, the trustees under my uncle's will, who are coming to see me to-morrow. They may say what they please, but I shall be firm upon the matter; a residence at Loddonford would keep my poor uncle and his sad fate perpetually before my mind, and, so far as I have seen of England at present, I have no desire to make it my permanent home. The sooner I am back with you, the better I shall be pleased, and we can then commence our projected tour of Europe.

"As for the professor, it is half ludicrous, half pitiable to watch him. He is constantly polishing his spectacles, under the impression that it is to their dimness, and not to the want of daylight, that he is unable to see half an inch beyond his nose; and he gasps for breath so much, that my own chestaches in sympathy. He is afraid even of lighting his pipe, for fear of adding to the density of the atmosphere. I have been out with him once or twice into the Strand; but he is so dazed by the noise of the traffic, and the number of the vehicles, that he stands with hands uplifted, like Dominie Sampson, crying, 'Was für eine stadt!' to the amusement of the passers-by. He has now gone out, under the charge of a commissionaire, to the British Museum, to visit which institution has been, he told me, the dream of his life.

"I have as yet seen nothing of Mr. Heath, who has gone to Manchester upon some business connected with the bank; but Mr. Hillman is loud in his praises, and ascribes the whole success of the management to his energy and tact."

The day after the despatch of this letter, the two trustees paid their promised visit. The elder and more important of them, Mr. Bence, was a dull, prosy, commonplace man, with an overweening sense of his own importance, derived entirely from his wealth. His ostensible profession was that of a stock-broker, head of a firm in a city court; but, besides this, his sources of

income were many and various: he owned a mast, oar, and block factory at Poplar, and a bone-boiling establishment at Vauxhall; the Vallombrosa Association, for importing genuine corks and bungs, and the Pay-at-your-own-time-and-what-amount-you-please Furnishing Company, meant Jonas Bence; he held a mortgage on the lease of the Champagne Charley Music Hall, and paid the printer's and paper-maker's bills, and the salaries of the contributors, of the Stiletto satirical newspaper. He lived in a big house in Westbourne Terrace, kept carriages and horses, entertained lavishly, and parted with his money freely; but for all that he had been unable to satisfy the one longing of his life, which was to get into society. The families of the old-fashioned city people, with whom he did business, visited at his house, it is true; but he wanted something more than that: he wanted to be among the "swells," as he called them; and he intrigued by every means in his power to that effect, but, somehow or other, it was not to be done.

Mr. Palmer, the other trustee, was a man of quite a different stamp. For more than thirty years he had practised as an attorney in Bedford Row, and, having amassed a considerable fortune, he bought an estate in Surrey, and devoted the rest of his life in endeavouring to forget his past career, and to induce those who knew him to do the same, and regard him as a country gentleman. He was a wiry little man, with a sharp, terrier-like face, bright eyes, bits of grizzled whisker, and closely-cut hair; he wore a suit of check ditto clothes, a pair of brown gaiters, and a low-crowned hat; he carried an ash stick, with which he was always slashing his legs. He spoke of himself, and tried to get other people to speak of him, as "the Squire," and played an important part in his parish, where he was chairman of the local government board and a J.P., in which latter capacity he was humbly reliant for legal advice on the town-clerk to the magistrates, occasionally taking up the volume of Archbold's Practice, which that functionary was in the habit of consulting, and looking at it as a rare work with which he had not been previously made acquainted; and never failing to poke his fun at the lawyers, by humorous references to their proverbial sharpness and greed of gain.

So far as Grace was concerned, these gentlemen had one failing in common—

that of joy that the heiress had come of age and their trusteeship was at an end. It had not troubled them much, it is true, considering that they had left all the business detail to Mr. Heath. They had accepted the trust because, when they had been first named to it, each of them had been in a poorer and less prominent position; and, when it fell to their lot to take it up, both felt that there was a certain éclat in being connected with the administration of the affairs of the gentleman whose murder had caused so much public talk and such regret in polite circles.

"How do you do, my dear?" said Mr. Bence, waddling slowly up the room, and shaking hands with her. If Grace had been a governess, or a young lady entirely unknown to fame, it is probable that Mr. Bence would never have vouchsafed to her his acquaintance; or, if he had, he would merely have wagged his head at her and got rid of her as soon as possible. But, as she was an heiress, he walked up to her, and conceded to her his hand.

"How d'ye do, Miss Middleham?" chirped little Mr. Palmer, walking in the rear of his portly co-trustee, like a dingey at a Dutch galley's stern. "Gad, what a frightful atmosphere! I wonder anyone can exist in these close London streets!" Mr. Palmer had, during thirty years of his life, passed his days in an office in Bedford Row, and his nights in a second floor back overlooking a mews in Great Ormond Street.

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Bence, who had by this time planted himself comfortably, with his back to the fire; "we are glad to congratulate you on coming into your property—lands and money, rent-rolls and estates, carriages and horses. Nice things, my dear," continued the fat man solemnly, and as if he really did think them very nice indeed.

"Yes, Miss Middleham," said Mr. Palmer, seeing the chance of edging in a word; "for my own part I not merely congratulate you upon your coming into the property, but I am not sorry that the responsibility is off my shoulders—plenty of my own to look after, and naturally enough one's own comes first. Not that your affairs have not been properly taken care of, and every justice done to it. Now there is Loddonford, for instance: that place has improved, I should say, fifteen per cent. since poor Middleham's death. Nice property, too; arable and meadow; subsoil drainage capitally carried out;

river frontage worth twelve hundred pounds an acre, if it is worth a penny."

"I am glad to hear so good an account of the Loddonford property," said Grace quietly. "It ought to sell for a large sum."

"A large sum, indeed," repeated Mr. Palmer; "but you are never thinking of selling it?"

"You are surely never thinking of parting with Loddonford, my dear?" said Mr. Bence, to whom the notion gave quite a new train of thought.

"I have thoroughly decided upon doing so," said Grace firmly. "I could never have any pleasure in the place, connected as it is with reminiscences of bygone happiness, and with anticipations which were never fulfilled. I had determined on this step long since, and should have carried it out even at a loss; and now, since these glowing accounts which you have given me, I can feel no compunction, if only from a business point of view."

"The sale will attract an immense amount of attention," said Mr. Palmer, reflectively. "There has been nothing going down in that part of the country, since Wandsworth's came under the hammer, when Chivers was smashed. Sir Thomas Buffam is sure to have a try for Loddonford, for those water-bordered meadows are just the grazing grounds for his Devons."

Bence said nothing for some minutes, being lost in a reverie. Suppose he were to go in to purchase this beautiful place, and become a landed proprietor—would not that give him the position in society which he so earnestly longed for, but which he had hitherto failed in obtaining? People in London knew everything: everybody knew about the stockbroker's office, and many suspected the bone-boiling and cork-cutting establishments, and the ownership of the music-hall and the satirical journal. Now down in the country nothing of this would be known. He would be Mr. Bence of Loddonford; perhaps Squire Bence, J.P.—why not Deputy-Lieutenant Bence—and at once, in virtue of his wealth, he would take up his position among the county magnates. Elsewhere, he might find it difficult; but there he would have peculiar facilities. As trustee of the late Mr. Middleham, who was so well known and so much respected in the neighbourhood, he would come, as it were, with an introduction which the most fastidious could scarcely refuse to recognise. It was a

good idea; and when he had thought it out, he said:

"I do not see the absolute necessity for any public sale, Palmer. If Miss Middleham has made up her mind to part with the estate, it might perfectly well be arranged by private contract."

Mr. Palmer, who saw at once what was intended, but who had no reason for opposing the designs of his co-trustee, chirped his acquiescence.

"However, we will see all about that later on," said Mr. Bence, after another pause. "The lawyers will have to be consulted, and that sharp fellow who manages at the bank—what's his name? Now, my dear, it only remains for me to say that we shall be very happy to see you at dinner at Westbourne Terrace on Sunday next at seven. Your uncle, a German gentleman, accompanies you, I understand? Let him come too; he will be welcome. No use asking you, Palmer, I suppose; you will not be in town?"

"Not I," said Mr. Palmer; "as a standing rule the rector dines with me on Sundays to talk about School Board matters."

"Ah, very interesting," said Mr. Bence. "I cannot get a rector for you, my dear; but you will find some not undistinguished people. Till Sunday then, at seven." And the two trustees left Grace to her reflections.

Later on in that same afternoon, while the professor was still engaged in delightedly exploring the wonders of the British Museum, a card was brought to Grace, who was in her bed-room, bearing the name of "Mr. Heath." "The gentleman," the maid said, "was anxious to see Miss Middleham; but, if not convenient, would wait upon her at another opportunity." Grace sent to beg that he would be seated, as she would be with him at once.

Miss Middleham had only seen Mr. Heath once or twice, and then at a period when she was in great trouble, and her recollections of him were consequently somewhat confused. She remembered him as a well-bred looking man, and unlike her idea of a banker's clerk; but she was by no means prepared for the strikingly handsome man who, with a winning smile which illumined his ordinarily stern expression, rose from his seat and greeted her entrance.

"I am somewhat late in paying my homage, Miss Middleham, but I may plead that my absence has been on your business and in your service. Your majesty," he

continued, with a gay air, "has already, I presume, received deputations congratulating you on your accession?"

"Such deputations," said Grace, very much pleased with his meaning, and fully entering into his humour, "have waited upon me, but I am assured by them, and by all, that the state of prosperity in which I find my kingdom and my affairs is wholly due to the zeal and ability with which they have been watched over by my prime minister, to whom I am glad to express great gratitude."

"The prime minister is sufficiently thanked by the knowledge that his work has had any good results," said Heath, bending low, "and by the fact that it has given any pleasure to his sovereign. But, dear Miss Middleham," he continued, raising his head, and looking round him with an air of great disgust, "how is it that I find you in such an extraordinary place as this?"

"It is rather dull, is it not?" said Grace ruefully.

"Dull? it is even sufficient to have a depressing effect upon the spirits of one entering life with your advantages and your prospects. I cannot say more. But how on earth did you come here? what curious topographical law enabled you to discover such a rococo establishment in such a bygone locality?"

"I had nothing to do with it," pleaded Grace; "I was recommended to come here by Mr. Hillman."

"Of course," said Heath, laughingly, "I might have guessed that. However, I will see the old gentleman at once, and impress him with the necessity of your being directly moved to more rational quarters."

"Do you think that is worth the trouble?" said Grace, "for my stay in London will be so short."

"I am by no means so sure of that," said Mr. Heath. "Coming into a large property, though everything has been kept pretty straight, is not so easy as people imagine. There is a very great deal of business detail to be gone through, and whether you like it or not, you will have, perforce, to remain here much longer than you had any idea of on your arrival. But I hope you will like it—it will be my pleasure to make you do so—and you must not judge of London life, as seen through the begrimed windows of an old-fashioned hotel, in a back street off the Strand."

"I am in the hands of my lawyers and



trustees," said Grace, "and of course must do as they bid me; but, if I have to remain, I should like, I confess, to go to some livelier neighbourhood, not only for my own sake, but for the professor's."

"The professor?" said Heath, elevating his eyebrows. "Oh, yes, I recollect, Dr. Sturm, who has accompanied you from Bonn. It is too bad to think that he should have derived his ideas of London from this place."

"So I felt," said Grace, "although it does not much matter to him, dear old soul, so long as he has the British Museum or the Royal Society, or one of those receptacles of learning to go to."

"Still, such a man ought to see us at our best," said Heath, "and I will take care that he has all proper introductions to the places and people where he is likely to be appreciated. But before anything else I must see to your comfort; it is not right that you should be left here by yourself with only a few old men of business, like myself, to look after you."

When he had taken his leave, Grace could not resist smiling at the idea of his classing himself with the other "old men of business." How handsome he was, and how excellent were his manners, so easy and careless, and yet thoroughly well-bred! So different too from all that she had been accustomed to lately, from the stiff, conventional courtesy of men like Franz Eckhardt, or the sighing romantic nonsense of idiots like Paul Fischer! Her recollection of Mr. Heath was that he had been stern and unpleasant, short in speech and brusque in manner. How wrongly she had judged him! He was kindness itself, not merely towards herself—that was to be looked for, perhaps, on account of the position which she held—but to the professor, about whom he spoke with so much interest and forethought. How singular that Anne should always have shunned the mention of Mr. Heath's name! She cannot surely have known him, or she would have been taken with his appearance and conversation. In that first conversation on the subject which she had had with her friend during their school-days, Grace remembered some mention of Mr. Heath as being acquainted, and, she thought, engaged in business, with Anne's father, Captain Studley.

That was perhaps the clue to the mystery. Although Anne had implored that direct reference to her father should

not be made, she had not scrupled to avow that he was a wicked man, and that she was anxious to forget him and her connection with him. Captain Studley must have behaved badly to his friend Mr. Heath, Grace thought, and that was the reason why Anne avoided the mention of his name. That Mr. Heath could be in any way in fault, Grace could not imagine for an instant; the trustees and the lawyers had been unanimous in volunteering their testimony to his excellent management, under which the bank business had so largely increased, and she herself had proved all his kind interest in her, his proffered services to Dr. Sturm, and his determination that her stay in London should be rendered as agreeable as possible.

She had but little knowledge of the world, this young lady, whose experience had been confined to the school-house at Hampstead, and to the sober life in the quiet German town, and it was not wonderful therefore that she should mistake electro-plating for the sterling metal. The skilled and observant eye would have noticed the exaggeration, the restlessness, and above all, the complete want of repose, which are so eminently characteristic of under-bred people; but skilled and observant eyes are seldom found in young ladies of twenty-one, and there was no doubt that Mr. Heath was exceptionally good-looking, and had made himself very agreeable.

Two days afterwards he called again, and was graciously received.

"I have not been forgetful, Miss Middleham," he said, "of the worthy German gentleman who has accompanied you to England, and I have brought with me a few orders for Dr. Sturm's admission to the meetings of the various scientific societies during the week; I have also had his name placed as an honorary member of certain clubs, where he will probably meet congenial spirits."

Grace thanked him heartily. "And for myself?" she said with a smile.

"You may depend upon it you have not been forgotten. I could not bear the idea of your remaining in this gloomy place, so I have had rooms secured for you at Fenton's, and on my way upstairs took the liberty of instructing your servant to remove there at once with bag and baggage; but this is only a temporary measure."

"Only temporary!" cried Grace. "What is finally to become of me?"

"Nothing unpleasant, I trust," said Mr. Heath, with a bow and a pleasant smile; "but the fact is that I have been going into business details thoroughly with Mr. Hillman; and we have agreed that it will be quite impossible for you to carry out your idea of returning to Germany, at least for some time."

"Not return to Bonn!" cried Grace, with a half look of disappointment.

"Not yet," said Mr. Heath; "but I trust we shall be able to make your stay in London more pleasant than you appear to anticipate. In truth, my dear Miss Middleham, if you will permit me to say so, you scarcely appreciate the position which you are called upon to fill. I have consulted with the trustees; and, though though they no longer have any legal power over you, they have authorised me to state that they concur with me in thinking that under the circumstances the proper thing to be done for you is, that a house should be taken in London for the season, and that you should be properly launched into society under the auspices of a lady of quality, who should be retained to act as your chaperon."

"Dear me," said Grace, innocently, "is it possible that ladies of quality are to be found who dispose of their services in that way?"

"They are to be counted by the score," said Mr. Heath with a smile.

"I hope you won't bring me a dreadful old dragon," said Grace.

"You may depend upon my discretion," said Mr. Heath. "May I tell Mr. Hillman that you consent to the plan?"

"I am entirely in your hands, Mr. Heath," said Grace, with a blush. "I am sure you will advise me for the best."

#### SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF NUTRITION.

THE due supply and proper use of food can never fail to be an object of deep and vital interest to mankind at large. Not merely life, but health, morality, and civilisation are indissolubly connected with that great question of daily bread which, of itself, absorbs the hopes and the energies of by far the larger portion of the human race. Taking, from a scientific standpoint, a survey of the world, we shall find that both aliments, and those who subsist on them, have a natural tendency to arrange themselves in distinct and different groups. Men may be classified, roughly, but with

sufficient accuracy for all practical purposes, into four sections; namely, hunters dependent on animal food eked out by a few fruits, roots, and vegetables; pastoral people, who add a little bread and more meat to much dairy produce; the purely agricultural races, with whose members grain is the mainspring of the social mechanism for national support; and, lastly, the omnivorous commercial communities, the materials of whose diet are drawn together, by the magic of superior wealth, through all channels, and from all available sources.

Food again, broadly speaking, ranges itself under certain well-known heads. There is a technical difficulty, no doubt, in distinguishing where vegetable life merges into that of the animal creation, and where the mollusc, rooted to its rock, ceases to take precedence of the almost equally sentient plant. But, in a popular sense, the distinctions between animal and vegetable food are fairly well marked. Fish, flesh, fowl, with eggs, butter, milk, and other animal products, belong to one category; the cereals, fruit, fleshy vegetables, herbs, fungi, gum, starch, sugar, alcohol, and peculiar vegetable extracts, such as tannin, nicotine, and theine, to the other. The traditional standard, however, by which the relative value of food is measured, is essentially of an empirical character, and is founded on local prejudices which vary considerably; but which, in all instances, date from days anterior to those which have witnessed the important discoveries due to the recent progress of organic chemistry. To convince an untutored, or even a semi-educated person, that nearly all the merits of a juicy and succulent steak might, by judicious cooking, be derived from the humble bean, the disregarded oak-mushroom, and the despised onion, would be a task not much less arduous than Galileo's demonstration that our earth was round. And yet it is unquestionably true that the esculent fungi, the most nutritious of the grains, and some leguminous plants, contain a very large proportion of that nitrogen which renders meat so costly and highly valued an article of diet.

We cannot, in the Old World, find, within the limits of the historical period, a race that might be regarded as fair specimens of the primæval hunter. Ovid's highly-coloured picture of the noble or ignoble savage is but the dream of a poet; while the Sestrygonians of Herodotus, even if accurately described, formed at

best but a handful of exceptionally situated barbarians. It was not until the broad waters of the Atlantic and Pacific had been repeatedly ploughed by European keels, that civilised mankind encountered, face to face, nations that in some respects realised the fancies of the courtly laureate of Augustus, and that literally lived on the produce of bow and tomahawk, of spear and boomerang. There is no reason for suspecting exaggeration in the estimate that the Red Indians of North America, two centuries since, amounted to nearly six millions, a population equal to that of the England of the period. All these relied on venison and bison-beef, on the wild turkey, the shad and the salmon, the globe-fish and the sand-grouse, for their sustenance. The many thousand natives who peopled the mainland of Australia, and the great neighbouring island of Tasmania, led a more precarious and degraded life on the spoils of a chase, of which the objects, owing to the singular lack of large mammals in Australia, were few and hard to capture.

An instructive lesson is to be learned from careful observation of the results of an almost exclusively animal diet, combined with much exercise, on the Indians of North America. A considerable degree of physical development, of grace, vigour, and even of beauty, is certainly to be found under these conditions. A stature superior to the average height of Europeans, large and well-shaped limbs, and a commanding presence, are very commonly to be met with. Again, the stately figures of the flesh-fed Indians of the prairies can be instantly distinguished from the shorter and more ungainly forms of those who belong to the fish-eating tribes, as, for example, the Chinooks; while the dwarfish and hideous Root-Digger shows, in his stunted growth and anxious face, how powerfully diet may act in the formation of national character. Yet it is equally beyond dispute that an ordinary white man of active habits is not only the Indian's superior in muscular strength, but also in speed of foot, and even in endurance of fatigue; while within the comparatively narrow limits of the ancient empires of Mexico and Peru a kindred stock far surpassed in numbers, in industry, and in the arts, their scattered brethren of the northern continent.

The prolific powers of a race appear to reach the highest point when the pastoral stage has been passed, and when the com-

munity has become, like that of ancient Egypt or of modern Hindostan, purely agricultural. Nomadic tribes that depend for nourishment on the milk, and in a lesser degree on the meat, of the cattle that are their sole wealth, compare unfavourably in point of numbers with the swarming millions of such regions as the Nile Valley or the Delta of Bengal; but, on the other hand, the bodily health and robustness of the individual members of the community will usually be found to reach a very high standard. The high renown which the Swiss mercenaries acquired during the Italian wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was due not only to the valour, but also to the vigour of the mountaineers. To the slightly-built citizens of the mediæval Town-Republics, the strength and activity of the herdsmen of Uri appeared as something portentous, just as the physical prowess of the milk-fed Goths had astounded the degenerate Romans of the Eastern Empire; and, at a later period, the muscular force of the Seljukian and Ottoman Turks became proverbial among the Romance-speaking nations of Southern Europe.

A population, which—like that of Bengal, of Siam, of ancient Egypt, or of mediæval Lombardy—relies for its subsistence on grain crops and garden produce, seems under certain conditions of soil and climate to be capable of almost indefinite numerical increase. In such communities the average of bodily and mental power will usually be found to reach a moderately high level, which few will surpass, but below which, on the other hand, few will fall. In muscle, as in brain power, mediocrity is likely to be the rule. It is in countries such as these, that the effects of the great historical famines have been the most fearfully felt.

A monotonous diet is invariably the token, either of a sterile soil, or of an indolent people. It was the barren ground and the backwardness of agriculture which condemned the Norwegian to mingle sawdust with his black rye bread, and which limited the Scottish peasant to his oatmeal porridge. A rich and enervating climate has taught the Polynesian islander to be satisfied with the spontaneous bounty of Nature; the bread-fruit that hangs in heavy clusters before his hut; the yams that grow, without care on his part, in the cane-fenced garden; the fish whose many-coloured shoals swim in the translucent water between the coral reef and the yellow sands

of the beach. In the tropics, as for example in Jamaica, the easily contented negro finds that the lightest labour is rewarded by a perennial supply of dainty fruits and vegetables; while on the coasts of Malabar and Ceylon a native family finds it no difficult matter to subsist on the products of the hereditary clump of cocoanut palms, and the cluster of jack-trees, whence fall the gigantic fruit that furnish them with their subsistence during summer.

A considerable amount of popular error prevails with regard to the diet of remote nations, and to the nature and quantity of the nutriment, on which the dwellers in hot climates are maintained in a condition of health. Beyond a vague notion that Asiatics live upon rice, few ideas are entertained as to the food of by far the larger portion of the human race. No belief could well be more mistaken, than that which attributes to the staple grain of South-Eastern Asia the qualities which render corn the staff of life. What is true of wheat and of maize is not true of rice, which latter constitutes a food too bulky, insipid, and innutritious for existence to be maintained on it alone.

In Ceylon, Malabar, and the Malayan peninsula, it is notorious that the hardest-working coolie cannot consume a pound of boiled rice; whereas an Irish labouring man in Ireland can, and does, require seven or eight pounds of potatoes for a single meal. But the very poorest natives of the East, however frugal and abstemious their mode of life may be, are urged by the pressure of necessity to eke out the daily ration of rice with grain of some sort, such as millet or jowaree; with coarse varieties of pulse, such as dall and grain; with garden vegetables; and with oil or clarified butter. The consumption of ghee throughout India is very great, while the most orthodox Bengalee will not decline to mingle with his curry the small dried sea fish which are carried from the coast into the inland districts, and even on festival occasions to partake of a little goat's flesh, dried and powdered, which the Hindoo faithful are permitted to eat by the special dispensation of the priestly caste.

In Siam, Burmah, and China, where, as is the case of all Buddhist countries save Thibet and Mongolia, no dairy produce is attainable, bean-oil, fish-oil, pulse, and the cheaper kinds of animal food supplement the insufficient diet of rice, which is often erroneously assumed to be the sole resource of the people. Persia, on the other hand, a wheat-growing country, where from

various causes the price of grain rules high, can offer to her poor population little beyond the cucurbitous plants for which her sandy soil is famous, but which are apt to fail in seasons of drougt and famine.

The Maoris of New Zealand afford a remarkable instance of a well-grown and athletic race, robust in body and mind, to whom Nature appeared to deny any but the most niggardly supplies of food. There is no reason to doubt the substantial truth of the Maori tradition that the forefathers of these so-called aborigines were emigrants from some remote Austral island; but it is certain that their new home, however favoured as regards climate, was, at the period of their arrival, one in which a less intelligent and vigorous tribe might have perished for lack of sustenance. The paucity of animal life in New Zealand is one of the most marked features of that singular country. Excepting the gigantic wingless fowl, the now extinct *Dinornis*, there was no game worthy of the name, while the Maoris were destitute of the bow which was the common property of all the barbarous races of the Old World, and had no missile weapon save the javelin. Nor was New Zealand one of those luxurious lands, where the wild fruits alone afford a perennial banquet to the needy, and where the banana and the plantain furnish daily bread, without the necessity for exertion. It was highly characteristic of this hardy and astute nation, that its members could secure a subsistence on fish and fern-roots only, until the arrival of the white men with hogs and horned cattle, with seed corn and vegetables hitherto unknown, and could win the respect, if not the liking, of the European intruders. Yet it would be a serious error to attribute the sterling qualities of the Maoris to their stinted diet, since chronic hunger and perpetual anxiety as to the means of existence have commonly contributed to keep the inhabitants of sterile countries in a condition of hopeless barbarism and squalor. The degraded tribes that range along the coast of Oman, seeking their scanty food from the capture of shell-fish among the rocks and sand-bars, would scarcely be recognised as the countrymen of the bold highlanders of Nejd; and the anxious countenances, and meagre frames, of the natives of Terra del Fuego testify to the influences of a life spent in doing battle with cold and famine.

The ignorance of our ancestors, with respect to the constituents of animal food,



led them to regard flesh meat as a simple instead of a compound substance, and to give the preference for nutritious properties, weight for weight, to fat meat. In the absence of microscopic or chemical analysis there is nothing wonderful in the fact that such an opinion should be formed. Animal fat has, indeed, especially in cold climates, peculiar merits as a heat-producing article of food. Were it not for the oleaginous nature of the diet on which the Esquimaux subsist, life could not be supported by dwellers within such high latitudes, where even a fire is an unattainable luxury, and where whale-blubber and seal's fat have to do duty, not merely for food, but actually for fuel as well. Within the Arctic Circle there is a constant struggle between animal vitality and the benumbing effects of a rigorous climate. The seal, the walrus, and the other cetaceous mammals, subsist on a regimen of fish or of marine animalculæ and molluscs; the white bear, the Arctic fox, and man himself, live entirely on animal food; while the reindeer derives the needful amount of warmth from the well-known moss which furnishes its winter provision, and which, as has been lately ascertained, is extraordinarily rich in sugar.

Fat, itself a compound, is by no means the most valuable and essential of the constituents of meat, containing as it does but a small dose of nitrogen, in proportion to the hydrocarbon of which it mainly consists. The albuminous or gelatinous portion of the meat, the alkaline salts, and the solid residuum or fibrine, co-operate with the utmost efficiency in the complicated process of nutrition. The high price and comparative scarcity of fresh meat have of late years suggested several methods for providing an inexpensive substitute for so costly an article of diet, the earliest and best known of which is the famous *Extractum Carnis*, to which Baron Liebig stood sponsor. The scheme promised well, introduced as it was under the auspices of so renowned a chemist, while the proposal was one which commended itself both to the philanthropist and the student of political economy. It was undoubtedly a pity that the carcasses of myriads of cattle, slaughtered for the sake of their hides and tallow, should be left perishing in South America, while the under-fed millions of European poor were almost wholly without animal food. To compress into small compass, so as to reduce the cost and difficulty of transport to a minimum,

all that was best worth having of the tons of beef daily flung to the vulture and the Pampas fox, was an idea likely to prove beneficial to the consumer, while a source of profit to the authors of the system. Accordingly a very large importation of the extract took place, and in Germany, in especial, the use of this condensed form of food promised to become general.

Even the scientific opponents of the extract have never denied that it justifies the assertions of the prospectus, by affording the materials for exceptionally strong soup, or that it is, as it professes to be, a highly concentrated essence of such portions of the meat as were amenable to the process employed. The first note of alarm was, however, sounded by Monsieur Muller, a young doctor of the Faculty of Paris, who boldly challenged the claim of soup itself to take rank as an article of diet. According to Doctor Muller, the soup or broth, which is a household word with all classes on the Continent, is not itself an item of food, but simply a tonic and an aid to digestion. If this audacious theorist may be believed—and he fortifies his position not merely by quotations from Brillat-Savarin, but by other authorities of greater weight in controversy—his own countrymen are not actually nourished by the soup on which the poorer of them believe themselves to dine, but merely employ their broth to render palatable the solid adjuncts of the meal. Nor will he allow the extract of meat, which contains no gelatine, no fat, and an infinitesimal quantity of albumen, to be entitled to a place among alimentary substances properly so called. He maintains that the best part of the meat has been left behind, and that the essence consists almost wholly of alkaline salts, and chiefly of the salts of potash, valuable as a tonic, but useless in a nutritious point of view, and more apt to provoke than to allay hunger.

It is very probable that national animosity may have had some share in lending acerbity to the criticisms which French chemists—for Monsieur Muller's example has been followed by several of his colleagues—have lavished upon Baron Liebig's celebrated extract. But no partiality can easily be attributed to the testimony of an Austrian experimentalist, Monsieur Kemmerich of Vienna, who in 1869, tried how long life could be maintained in dogs, fed exclusively on a minute quantity of the extract, while others of equal size were supplied with water alone. It was found

that the latter survived the former, and proved capable of being brought into a condition of normal health by a renewal of their ordinary regimen. At the same time other dogs lived contentedly on the refuse meat exhausted of its essence, but sprinkled with common salt to replace the alkaline salts which had been withdrawn. Many fairly authenticated cases attest that no aqueous infusion of meat can alone provide all the necessary elements of nutrition, and that we are not as yet rendered independent of our customary supplies of animal food, by any chemical process.

It is not as generally known as it deserves to be, how large is the share which oil, of animal, and still more of vegetable origin, takes in the nourishing of the great majority of our fellow-creatures. The globe-fish, which is an absolute reservoir of oil, does the same service to the Indians of North-Western America, that the seal does to the Greenlanders, in enabling them to support the severity of the long winter; while the tunny and the eel yield an unctuous food to the Neapolitan, and the negro ekes out his scanty store of flesh with the produce of the ground-nut, and the Shea-butter tree. The dinner of a Maltese peasant family consists of slices of bread steeped in the fresh oil of the olive; while in Spain, Portugal, and the South of France, onions and raw garlic, the latter of which is remarkably rich in the essential oils to which it owes its pungency, are found to allay the hunger of a frugal and abstemious population, rarely well supplied either with dairy produce or with meat. Wherever there is a warm climate and an abundant vegetation, it will be found that oil in some form or other enters largely into the popular bill of fare, and that by its aid the natives are enabled to reconcile themselves to privations which would be otherwise insupportable. Sugar, starch, oil, and fat, are all, however, heat-producing substances, of undeniable merit in their degree, but not sufficing as single and permanent sources of nutrition. The same may be said of gelatine, and the injurious effects of a diet on which it is often attempted to nourish children or elderly invalids—jelly, arrow-root, sago, and other aliments of a similar kind—are but too well known to every experienced physician.

For thorough and perfect nutrition the elementary substances should beyond doubt all be present in their fitting proportions—gluten and gelatine, fat and fibrine, starch

and sugar, with the alkaline salts so indispensable for the formation of the blood. Proceeding one step further we may safely predicate that, besides oxygen, which must be looked upon as an active assimilating agent, promoting but not imparting nutrition both in plants and animals, nitrogen, hydrogen, and carbon in adequate amount should be combined in the materials of all healthy nourishment. The merits of what is popularly styled a generous, or in other words a highly nitrogenised, diet, are widely known; yet the hard work of the world, so far as physical exertion is concerned, is certainly performed on a limited allowance of inferior food by manual toilers, whose very labour enables them to elicit the utmost amount of benefit from every ounce consumed. All who have made a long sea voyage, such as that to Australia or China, must remember the increase of appetite which succeeded to the customary nausea of sea-sickness, and which, in the case of emigrants ill-supplied with provisions, frequently amounts to raging hunger. This excessive inclination for food abates after a time, although a person in perfect health still craves for more nutriment at sea than ashore; yet the rations of seamen are none of the most bountiful, while there is less of bodily ailment among the stinted occupants of the fore-castle than among the officers, who naturally receive an unlimited supply of food.

The French soldier's rations have of late been slightly increased, but for many years they remained fixed at a standard, which was adopted as one fit to maintain the men at the average rate of health and strength to be found among the French peasantry. Half a pound, or, in rough numbers, eight and a half ounces of beef, with vegetables, furnish the soldier with the two meals of soup and bouilli which represent his breakfast and dinner, and which, with a pound and a half—or, say, about twenty-seven ounces—of bread, constitutes his whole sustenance. This dietary compares unfavourably with that of the English private, with his twelve ounces of meat; but since the time of Louvois the French army has been, theoretically at least, managed on principles of strict economy. To young men of the poorest class and from the poorest districts, such as Poitou, the Landes, or Dauphiny, this nourishment represents comparative abundance. The youth who, from infancy, has been better used to chestnuts than to bread, or whose ordinary dinner has consisted of rye-meal porridge,

as in the Sologne, or of cabbage-soup, as in Morbihan, is contented with his treatment beneath the colours; while the sturdy French-Fleming, or large-limbed Norman, finds it hard to reconcile himself to the pittance granted by the state. Yet, as a rule, the health of the troops maintains itself at a fair average, when contrasted with that of the civil population in time of peace, while that of the Prussian privates (whose bread-ration is smaller than that of the French, but with whom the deficiency is supplied by a larger weight of potatoes) is considerably above that of the rest of the people of the country.

There are theorists who maintain that brain-work exacts a more liberal diet than that which will suffice to sustain the health of those whose exertions are wholly muscular. This proposition is often disputed, on the ground that some of the leading thinkers, both of antiquity and of modern times, have been not merely abstemious, but even ascetic in their habits. In such a case as this, it is obvious that no general rule can safely be laid down. Some of the foremost leaders of civilised opinion, some of the mighty workers, whose names shine the brightest on the roll of fame, have led lives which would be popularly considered as severely self-denying. Others, no less renowned, have used, and in some instances notoriously abused, what our forefathers were accustomed to call the pleasures of the table. It would, however, be illogical and absurd to argue that the energy which impresses itself upon the world, or the genius that dazzles contemporary eyes, is a consequence either of the frugality or the luxuriousness of the individual in whom it is conspicuous. Many dull people of both sexes eat of the fat and drink of the strong without any remarkable reason or result, and a much larger number lead lives of enforced abstinence, that nevertheless effect nothing towards the development of the intellect.

Precisely as the habit of continuous manual labour enables human beings to subsist on a moderate amount of food, from which nature, thus stimulated, contrives to extract all the available pabulum, so does physical inaction occasion contradictory phenomena in the constitution. It may appear paradoxical to assert that the idle need, or at least crave for, a greater bulk and weight of food, and a larger variety of aliments, than the industrious; but the experience of every day tells us that this is the case.

It has been found necessary to concede a better supply of food, not only to the insane patients in asylums, but to criminals in prison, than that which would suffice to maintain them when at liberty. Convalescents in a well-managed hospital recover in direct proportion to the liberality with which they are fed, and, in spite of the proverbial parsimony of workhouse authorities, it has been found practically imperative to grant to paupers a diet somewhat more nutritious than that of the class from which they are chiefly recruited. A besieged garrison, passively cooped up in a blockaded fortress, feels the pangs of hunger to a far greater extent than does an army compelled to march and fight on insufficient nutriment. It has long been known that deep grief, and, indeed, any passion which exhausts the nervous system, promotes a craving for food which frequently appears inappropriate and unnatural in the eyes of non-scientific spectators, while, on the other hand, extreme muscular exertion often indisposes both men and animals for partaking of solid sustenance.

Gum, starch, sugar, and the many gelatinous and saccharine substances supplied by the vegetable kingdom, slight as is their power of contributing to genuine nutrition, possess the valuable property of deferring, so to speak, the assaults of hunger due to the wasting of the tissues, and of enabling life to be provisionally supported in the absence of azotised or stimulating food. The early traders on the Guinea Coast were astonished at the strange endurance displayed by the Ashantee scouts, who in war-time were accustomed to perch themselves among the highest branches of some lofty tree, and to remain, for days together, on the watch for the movements of an enemy, wholly, as it appeared, without nourishment. At last it was discovered, that the negro spies carried with them some rude lozenges of a reddish gum, native to the forests, and that on these, and on a little water contained in a calabash slung to the girdle, they could subsist uncomplainingly for a considerable time, but with a perceptible diminution of weight and strength. The use of pemmican among the Indians of North-Western America, and that of pellets of lime and albumen among the Texan hunters, is well known, and it is probable that the earth-eating propensities of the natives of Guiana and Venezuela arose from a similar wish to deaden the throes of famine; while the black alluvial soil deposited by the rivers of

South America, singularly rich in undecomposed organic matter, might actually yield some modicum of nutriment. The morbid taste for earth-eating peculiar to negroes on the African coast, and which, when once acquired, is said to be a habit as pernicious and as difficult of cure as dipsomania itself, may possibly have had a similar origin.

The vexed question, as to whether alcohol ought or ought not to be regarded as food, has been already elaborately and almost exhaustively discussed. But, at any rate, the enemies of alcohol, while denying it all nutritive properties, have never attempted to deny the stimulating effects which have rendered it popular, or the remarkable power, as a supplement or substitute for solid food, which it unquestionably possesses. That it cannot be so employed without serious injury to health, by no means disproves the existence of this quality, which it shares, however, with other stimulants and narcotics, not merely with opium and the juice of the Indian hemp, but with nicotine, with the active principle of tea and coffee, and with the essence of cocoa. A Peruvian peon who has once imbibed the fatal liking for the chewed leaves of the cacao tree, is regarded as presenting as hopeless a case as that of the confirmed dram-drinker of Europe, or the opium-smoker of China. Yet cacaoine, like the bhang of the Oriental Mussulman, or the arsenic of the Styrian mountaineer, during the earlier stages of its influence, appears to treat its victims more mildly than is the case with ardent spirits or morphine. It gives, or rather lends for a time, and at a fearful and usurious rate of interest, extraordinary vigour, speed, and sprightliness; and it is but gradually, and as the appetite for wholesome nourishment dies away, that the serviceable slave becomes the imperious taskmaster, demanding the slow sacrifice of health, strength, intellect, and life itself.

On passing in review the various alimentary staples on which the different branches of the human family subsist, it becomes obvious that nitrogen, whencesoever derived, is the element of nutrition that is the most instinctively and persistently sought for, and without which the remainder afford but an insipid and unsatisfying diet. Now, we can easily produce an article of food that shall be almost, or absolutely, deficient in nitrogen, but it would be impossible to discover any alimentary substance that should exclude hydrogen and carbon, while

including azote. A poorly-nourished population, depending, it may be supposed, according to latitude and national customs, on the potato, on rice, or on the gourds, melons, and other watery cucurbitous plants, cannot yet afford entirely to dispense with nitrogen in its daily sustenance. It will therefore be found that in those countries where bread is beyond the reach of the poorer classes, and where flesh-meat is regarded by them as an unattainable luxury, the deficiency is in part made up by milk, butter, cheese, or some oil, which, like dairy produce in general, contains a large percentage of nitrogen. The bean, the mushroom, and other highly nitrogenised vegetables, are of infinite value in this respect; while the large amount of gluten which wheat contains enables a wheat-fed people to be comparatively independent of animal food, at least in its most concentrated form. The effects of the imagination on the human appetite are well known, as is the truth that food which is palatable, and therefore relished, is the most likely to conduce to healthful nutrition, and it is thus an advantage that civilisation and commerce have enabled most nations to vary their diet at will, and to make it embrace many flavours and materials which in a ruder state of society were unknown. Still, however, the same problem continually presents itself, both to savage and to civilised man, how most conveniently to provide for each day's recurring wants; and this can never be satisfactorily solved by any regimen which does not include, in at least an approximately adequate proportion, the above-mentioned essentials of nutrition.

#### VOX NATURÆ.

Low heard the river-reeds among  
The wind responds with whisper'd sigh,  
To that sweet chant by wavelets sung,  
As onward to the marge they hie.  
Or, roaring thro' the forest blown  
Till branch with branch is interlock'd,  
The north makes all the woodland moan  
In rude embrace unceasing rock'd.  
Who would not own the magic spell  
To probe the purport of the breeze,  
To glean what zephyrs soft would tell  
When gone a-woeing 'mong the trees?  
What means the fond confession made  
By airy sighs in even's ear,  
What message breathes from shade to shade  
In ev'ry rustle that we hear?  
Doth brake to briar its tidings send,  
Doth leaf with leaf a converse hold,  
When breezes thro' the upland wend  
And die again along the world?  
Mayhap we view an angry strife  
'Twixt oak and ash, 'twixt beech and elm,  
And envy mars the sylvan life  
When storms, we think, the woods o'erwhelm.



Such fancies stir the dreaming mood  
 Of worshippers at Nature's shrine,  
 And add a charm to solitude,  
 Amid her mysteries divine;  
 When clearer to the sense reveal'd  
 Comes all her varied utterance,  
 And what to dullard ears is sealed  
 Makes eloquent the poet's trance.  
 Be ours the dreading thrice refined  
 The eye with inner sight endow'd  
 To catch the voices of the wind,  
 And shape the changes of the cloud.

## JOHN BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP.

## IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

I DON'T propose to discuss at length the events which led to the rise and progress of the present extraordinary mania for pottery, although the enemies of Cole, C.B., are never tired of decrying the expenditure of national money on crockery-ware for South Kensington; and the excellent Registrar of the Royal School of Mines, after surveying his neat and instructive collection, beats his breast, and proclaims himself a sinner in having aided to encourage the prevailing epidemic. Both of these gentlemen may console themselves with the reflection that, even as there were strong men before Agamemnon, so were there ceramians before the present outbreak. Through the reigns of buxom Mary and her successor, "mighty Anna," a rage for crockery seized upon all persons pretending to wit and fashion. Chinese and Japanese monsters fetched fabulous prices, and the famous definition of a perfectly well-bred woman—"mistress of herself, though China fall"—points distinctly to the estimation in which curious Oriental china was held. It does not appear that at the Queen Anne period, the artistic triumphs of Italian and French artists found much favour in the eyes of persons of quality, who loved blue Japanese dogs and grinning dragons, far better than what was then loosely classed as Raffaele-ware. Perhaps the taste of the period, except so far as literature was concerned, inclined towards the grotesque rather than the symmetrical. Araminta and Belinda rejoiced in negro pages, petted monkeys, and treasured the hideous fancies of Oriental ceramists. The recent revival, although responsible for an infusion of Japanese style into art, is yet due to a higher appreciation of the beautiful than that exhibited by our ancestors of a century and a-half ago. The extreme importance of elegant form, in the productions of the potter, has been so persistently and eloquently insisted on, that some indistinct idea, that a hideous outline cannot be atoned

for by any splendour of material, has taken possession of the public mind. No doctrine could be sounder than this, and it is curious to observe, in taking a hurried survey of the great centres of porcelain manufacture, that, with all minute attention to detail, the one important element of true form has, in western countries, rarely been neglected. To the collector, however, mere beauty is often subservient to rarity, and a specimen of a peculiar paste, exhibiting a certain highly prized texture or colour, and duly marked with the monogram of the artist and the manufactory, will possess for him a curious, and, to the uninitiated, an extraordinary value.

Without plunging into speculations concerning the pottery of pre-historic times, and without pausing to consider whether the first potter was one who, walking upon clayey soil moistened by inundations or rain, first observed that the earth retained the print of his footsteps, or was rather the cunning savage who first strengthened his calabash with a covering of clay, and communicated to early pottery an outline never since lost—it may yet be well to mention that the art of the potter is as honourable as it is ancient, and as beautiful as it is interesting. From vases constructed to hold the ashes of the illustrious dead, we gather curious particulars of their mode of living, and by the area over which relics of ancient pottery are found, can trace the limits of antique empires. Ancient Greece has left a clearly defined map of its extent, its colonies and conquests, in vast quantities of funereal pottery; and the utmost limits attained by the god Terminus are written in the remains of Roman cups and vases.

Ceramic art, perhaps more than any other, has enlisted the good-will of monarchs. By granting high premiums, and often by less gentle methods, the Chinese emperors promoted the manufacture of the famous egg-shell porcelain. Chinese ceramic history is not without a martyr, since canonised and worshipped as the patron saint of potters. Pousa, whose little corpulent figure is often met with in collections, was a working potter sorely vexed by the command of the emperor to produce an effect in porcelain, till then deemed impossible. Remonstrances produced no effect upon the brother of the Sun and Moon, who only became more obstinate with each successive failure of his servants. Finally the mandarin charged with the execution of

the emperor's commands called the manufacturers and the workmen together, and administered the bastinado all round to quicken their inventive faculties. Some slight improvement resulted from this vigorous action, but success not yet being attained, the mandarin kept the bastinado going briskly. The workmen, sore in body and in mind, at last gave way to despair, and one of them, named Pousa, to escape further ill-usage, sprang into the furnace and was immediately consumed. When the firing was completed the furnace was opened, and the porcelain was found perfect, and just as the emperor desired it, and Pousa—the martyr—was appeased by divine honours.

In Europe the Dukes of Urbino fostered by their patronage the production of the beautiful majolica. Henry the Second of France and his wife Catherine de' Medici protected Palissy from the zeal of their own followers, and helped much to develop his genius. In the case of the true porcelain manufacturers of Europe, the effect of patronage was even more distinct, for the art was only introduced in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and in less than fifty years' time rose to its greatest perfection. Augustus the Strong, Maria Theresa, Frederic the Great, Catherine of Russia, and Madame de Pompadour took a keen interest in the new art, and "Butcher" Cumberland supported the famous establishment at Chelsea, which, at the death of its patron, was abandoned for want of encouragement. Not even Wedgwood escaped royal patronage—his newly-invented earthenware having been introduced under the patronage of Queen Charlotte.

To avoid confusion, it may be well to state the difference between pottery and porcelain—properly so called. As already mentioned, the manufacture of porcelain was unknown in Europe previous to the last century, but has probably been practised in China for about two thousand years. Porcelain differs from pottery in possessing a beautiful translucency, and may be regarded as an intermediate substance between pottery and glass—some specimens, indeed, as those of early Chelsea, are little better than semi-opaque glass. The name "porcelaine" sufficiently indicates this quality. Existing in the French language long before the introduction of china to Europe "porcelaine" was applied to that beautiful lining of marine shells, called by us mother-of-

pearl. The application of this word to china-ware is probably due to the Portuguese. "Porcellana" is the word which they apply to cowrie shells, and was transferred to the translucent ware, either on account of a certain similarity in appearance, or, as is more probable, from a belief that china was made from the shells themselves. Edoardo Barbosa, who died in 1576, says it was made from marine shells and egg shells buried in the earth for eighty or a hundred years; and this belief was entertained by Jerome Cardan and Scaliger. M. Jacquemart gives what Guido Pancirolli or Pancirollus wrote in Latin—"Past centuries have not seen porcelains, which are merely a certain mass, composed of plaster, eggs, scales of marine locusts, and other similar kinds, which mass, being well united and worked together, is secretly hidden underground by the father of a family, who informs his children alone of it, and it remains there eighty years without seeing daylight; after which his heirs, drawing it out and finding it suitably adapted for some kind of work, make out of it those precious transparent vases, so beautiful to the sight in form and colour, that architects find nothing in them to improve upon. Their virtues are admirable, inasmuch as if one puts poison into one of these vessels, it breaks immediately. He who once buries this material never recovers it, but leaves it to his children, descendants, or heirs, as a rich treasure, on account of the profits they derive from it; and it is of far higher price than gold, inasmuch as one rarely finds any of the true material, and much that is sold is unreal."

"Porcelain," according to Marryatt's definition, "is composed of two substances—the one fusible, which produces its transparency; the other infusible, which gives it the property of sustaining without melting the heat necessary to vitrify the fusible substance. The infusible ingredient consists of alumina or clay called Kao-lin; the fusible is composed of felspar or petrosilex, and is styled Pe-tun-tse. These two materials correspond almost exactly with the china clay and china stone of which such huge quantities are exported yearly from Cornwall. Kao-lin being discovered in 1769 at St. Yrieix, near Limoges, Sèvres at once produced fine porcelain; and a similar effect followed its detection at Meissen, where what is called Dresden china was first made. One John Schnorr, an iron master, riding near Anl, observed

a soft white earth clinging to his horse's feet, and considering that this might be used as a substitute for wheat flour as hair-powder, carried some away with him, and it was subsequently sold for this purpose at Dresden in large quantities. Böttcher, the director of the royal potteries at Meissen, finding his hair powder heavier than usual, was induced to examine it, and subsequently to use Kao-lin in porcelain manufacture, where its employment was long kept a profound secret. The establishment was a complete fortress for the confinement of the people employed, and "Be Secret until Death" was placed on the walls of the workshops. In this country the discovery of Kao-lin took place as late as 1755, when William Cookworthy of Plymouth discovered that certain clays near Helstone, Cornwall, were of the same character as specimens of Kao-lin he had seen brought from Virginia. Associated with Lord Camelford, Cookworthy worked the china clay at St. Stephens, near St. Austell, and established the porcelain manufactory at Plymouth, afterwards removed to Bristol. In this neighbourhood, and at Lee Moor, near Plympton, in Devonshire, the Kao-lin is prepared for the cunning hand of the potter. Decomposed granite rock is broken out, and exposed on an inclined plane to a fall of water which washes it down to a trench, whence it is conducted to catch-pits. "The quartz, schorl, mica, and other minerals present are chiefly retained in the first pit, and as the water charged with clay flows onwards it deposits the grosser particles, and eventually the pure and fine clay is deposited in tanks prepared to receive it, and the mass is allowed to consolidate. The clay is then run into a roofed building, beneath the floor of which hot air circulates freely. Thus the clay is dried perfectly. It is then cut into oblong lumps, and, having been scraped, to remove the dust from the outside, is sent to the potteries."

China stone is the production of the granite rock which forms the Kao-lin, but in a less state of decomposition: the felspar still retaining much of its silicate of potash or soda, associated with the quartz and scales of a greenish yellow talcose substance.

These, then, are the substances, on the possession of which the manufacture of true porcelain depends. More ancient western productions of fictile art are more truly earthenware—highly glazed and otherwise decorated—than true porcelain.

For thousands of years before the introduction of porcelain to the western world, soft pottery—"fayence à pâte tendre," had been produced in forms of surpassing beauty. It was "unglazed," "glazed," and "lustrous"—under which three heads the ancient pottery of Egypt, Greece and Rome, may be classed, as well as the more modern kinds in common use among all nations—and "enamelled," of clay, sandy or chalky, covered with thick enamel, composed of stone or quartzose sand, with oxides of tin and lead. Under this fourth class fall the splendid productions of the renaissance known loosely as Faenza, Majolica, Gubbio and Raffaele ware.

A peculiar and interesting feature of both pottery and porcelain, is that its makers were probably the first human beings who signed their work with a monogram or trade mark, a practice jealously maintained through long ages. The beautiful coralline red ware commonly known as Samian, and discovered in considerable quantities in the centres of the old Roman civilisation, almost invariably bears the potter's name. On a handsome vase of this lustrous red ware, appear the letters OF. VITAL: signifying *Officina Vitalis*, from the workshop of Vitalis. The manufacture of pottery of a bright nasturtium red colour appears to have been carried on with great activity in the countries under Roman rule; and as the colour produced is of one uniform shade, it is reasonable to suppose that the potter first set about to procure a sufficiently colourless clay, of the proper density, and then gave it the proper shade of colour by the introduction of red ochre. This red ware was probably baked in moulds, impressed with the design, and the potter's name, which appears at the bottom of a pattern, thus, VRSVLVS. In London, many fine specimens of red ware have been discovered, some of which are marked OF. RVFINI—from the workshop of Rufinus—some, TITIVS enclosed in a circle—and others, VLIIGGI M., or *manû*—made by the hand of the potter Uliggus.

Although many of the arts bestowed upon conquered nations by imperial Rome, were retained by them long after the central power was defunct, the somewhat ill-defined period known loosely as the dark or the middle ages present, so far as its pottery is concerned, a miserable figure by the side of classic ages. So far as form—the most important consideration—

is concerned, the productions of mediæval potters are open to severe criticism, and it seems almost incredible, that mankind having once acquired the possession of useful and beautiful outlines, should have degenerated into the use of vessels at once hideous and inconvenient. Much of this ugly crockery-ware was deeply glazed with a green glaze, and it appears to have been very largely used up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. In admirable symbolism of their chances of life, and of comfort during their respective tenure of life, the great lords drank from pots, goblets, jugs and bowls of gold, silver, or other metal, while those of the meaner sort drank from "green pots" their huge draughts of fat ale. The poor earthen pots stood but a poor chance in those days. If they said nothing they were ground into the dust: if they spake aloud the metal pots speedily crushed them.

While thus the manufacture of decorative pottery was entirely lost in Europe, Mohammedan invaders, finding some traditions of ceramic art in Spain, introduced the manufacture of the tiles of enamelled earthenware, with which the mosques of Persia and Arabia were adorned. By these beautiful tiles the footsteps of the Saracen may be traced, from the shores of Africa to Seville, Toledo, and the fortress palace of Granada. Not only tiles, but magnificent vases of elegant and dainty workmanship were produced, especially under the later period of Moorish domination. The most ancient pieces of this manufacture are enriched with blue and manganese colours, as well as yellow lustre, and are painted with arms and interlaced ornaments. As the art advanced, metallic lustres were introduced; a brilliant copper-red being the richest and latest of these improvements. In Malaga, Valencia, and Majorca was carried on an important manufacture of Hispano-Morisco pottery, of which large collections exist in the Louvre.

From this work it is supposed that the Italian potters learned their trade. So highly was the infidel pottery esteemed, that plates or bacini of it are found incrustated in the walls of the most ancient churches of Pisa, as well as in those of other towns in Italy. Those in the Pisan churches came chiefly from Majorca, where warriors, coming home from the crusades, stopped to bring home this peculiar earthenware. In 1115 the Pisans took the Balearic isles and an immense booty,

among which much enamelled pottery was doubtless included; but nevertheless it took some considerable time before Italian majolica was produced. Not before the year 1300 did the ceramic art assume a decorative character under the Malatestas, lords of Pesaro, a town in the duchy of Urbino. A body of red clay was covered with a thin coating (engobe) of very white earth procured from the territory of Siena, and called "terra di San Giovanni," which served as a ground for the coloured patterns. The vessel was partly baked, and then covered with lead glaze, after which it was carried to the kiln to receive its final firing. "This overlaying of an opaque white substance," saith Mr. Marryatt, "formed quite a new process, and may be considered the starting point of majolica. The colours employed were yellow, green, blue, and black. The lead glaze, being soft, and liable to be affected by external influences, imparted to the ware the metallic, iridescent lustre by which the 'mezza majolica' is characterised."

Between the time referred to, and that of the fine majolica, occurred a period of transition, during which a new glaze was introduced. The merit of applying stanniferous enamel to terra-cotta reliefs doubtless belongs to Lucca della Robbia, goldsmith, sculptor, and potter; but it is by no means clear that he invented the said tin glaze. Some refer the invention to Chaffagiolo, and others to Germany; but Lucca was the first to apply it to important works. At first he confined himself to working in two colours, and produced bas-reliefs, executed entirely in white on a blue ground. He subsequently introduced other colours—green, maroon, and yellow, but was very sparing in the use of any colours but white and blue. Lucca della Robbia did not sign his works, which are distinguishable from those of his brother by great purity of style, and an excessively delicate use of colour.

While this manufacture of glazed terra-cotta was going on in Florence, the makers of mezza majolica continued to improve their work under the patronage of the house of Sforza, to whom the lordship of Pesaro had been sold by the Malatestas. Special privileges were granted to manufacturers by the new rulers, and were afterwards confirmed by the dukes of Urbino. Pesaro soon acquired a great reputation for its pottery, and by the year 1510 majolica was formally enumerated among the trades of that city. Early



specimens of mezza majolica are generally adorned with a kind of Moresque ornament or with family arms, the heads of saints, heathen goddesses, contemporary princes, and popes. To these are attached mottoes explaining the subject. In this peculiar pottery the outlines of the figures are traced in black or blue; the drawing is correct, but hard and dry, the figures flat and lifeless; but what mezza majolica wants in these points is amply made up by the extraordinary beauty of the glaze, the mother-of-pearl-like splendour of which has never been surpassed. The finest productions of this kind are by an unknown artist who flourished at Pesaro about 1480. The dishes are large and thick and were evidently made for show, not use, the circular projections of the back of them being perforated with two holes, to admit a string for suspending them. Blue and yellow are the colours employed, and these are highly iridescent. This metallic lustre was afterwards applied to "fine majolica," as will be seen presently.

Some years after the death of Lucca della Robbia, the white stanniferous enamel came into general use at Florence, and at Faenza. Fine white ware was the first product of this beautiful enamel glaze, but long after, when the Florentine potters, following the example of their brethren of Urbino, decorated their ware with coloured designs and arabesques, they often preserved the white ground. At the end of the fifteenth century, the white tin enamel came into use among the potters of the Duchy of Urbino, and the manufacture of fine majolica commenced. This differed in many important particulars from its predecessor. In mezza majolica, the flesh-coloured clay was covered with an "engobe"—already described—on this designs were traced in manganese, and certain parts of them were filled with the yellow colour, which the firing rendered glittering like gold. In the case of fine majolica, the same colours were applied upon a tin enamel, and the process of manufacture also varied in several important particulars. The piece was half-fired, "a bistugio"—concerning which practice, it is worth while to note that, as early as 1361, mention is made of one Giovanni dei Bistugi—John of the Biscuits. It was next dipped into the enamel, composed of oxide of tin and lead, with other combinations. This vitreous opaque coating concealed the dirty colour of the paste, and presented an

even white surface, to serve as a ground for the painting. The artist now laid his colours on the moist glaze, and when he had finished his work, and painted a yellow line round the rim, the piece was dipped into the "marzacotto" glaze, and returned to the furnace to receive its final firing. The metallic lustre was added afterwards, and made a third baking necessary.

Shortly after these innovations, majolica reached its most palmy period: the finest qualities of the mezza majolica being given to the new ware, which was also ornamented with far greater artistic skill. The famous lustre ware manufactured at Gubbio has attained a world-wide reputation. It would seem that about the year 1485, Giorgio Andreoli, a gentleman of Pavia, came with his brothers to Gubbio. He was granted rights of noble citizenship, and subsequently served as gonfalonier. Sculptor and painter by profession, Maestro Giorgio executed several bas reliefs in the style of the Della Robbia family, but is chiefly known by his majolica plates, glowing with the richest and most brilliant colours. His favourite hues were the golden-yellow and ruby-red, and in the use of the latter he had no rival. His subjects are generally encircled with a border of fiery red and gold-coloured arabesques, on a blue ground. His works are dated from 1518 to 1537, but he was alive as late as 1552. This was the famous Maestro Giorgio of Gubbio, whose works are now so eagerly sought for. His work is not invariably signed in the same way, but his customary mark was "M<sup>o</sup> G<sup>o</sup>," for Maestro Giorgio, and many of the finest specimens are dated. Many of these also contain the artist's name at greater length, as "M<sup>o</sup> Giorgio da Ugubio." Touching this great artist, M. Jacquemart remarks as follows: "The idea, enounced by Vincenzo Lazari, and propagated by several English authors, that Giorgio, inventor of the secret of metallic lustres, would have reduced himself to becoming the itinerant vendor of a sleight-of-hand secret, and have put his process up to auction in every workshop, is impossible to believe now. In the first place, Andreoli was not the inventor of the lustres; next, painters respected themselves too much to obliterate their art in the possession of a chemical mixture, and allow an arcanist to substitute his name for theirs, after having spread some golden ground or disfigured certain compositions by speckling them with touches of mother-

of-pearl or ruby-red." Maestro Giorgio certainly had many assistants, among whom were his brothers and his son, whose signatures are difficult to distinguish.

The manufacture of majolica was carried on with great spirit at the city of Urbino, the birth-place of Raffaello. First among the ceramic artists of his own or any other country is Orazio Fontana, whose works are specialised by their boldness and breadth of drawing, as well as by their admirable fusion and brilliant glaze. A magnificent cup in the possession of Baron Rothschild is, like many of Fontana's works, inscribed thus, FATE-IN-BOTEGA - DE - ORATIO - FONTANA; but many of his productions are merely signed with the letter O in a cartouche, and many more are unsigned. All over the Duchy of Urbino the ceramic arts flourished; as, in addition to the manufactories at Gubbio, Pesaro, and Urbino, the city of Castel Durante supplied potters and painters to the greater part of the workshops of Italy, and sent ceramic colonies to Flanders and Corfu. The majolica of this city is famous for its beauty of execution, rather than for novelty and boldness of design. It is often marked IN CASTEL DURANTE, and sometimes the name of the artist is added. One of the Castel Durante marks—FATTO IN BOTEGA DI PICCOLO PASSO—recalls the name not only of an artist, director of a botega, and a chevalier to boot, but author of a treatise on the art of making and decorating majolica. This curious work was written about 1550, and the manuscript has found its way at last to South Kensington.

Whatever may be the value of the claims of Faenza to extreme antiquity as a producer of pottery, this certainly has imposed its name on the French language as the representative of all soft pottery, as china in this country signifies porcelain. All Faenza pieces are covered with a rich glazed marzacotto; many among the older pieces are enamelled in "berettino," a pale blue or starch colour. Often a broad border of blue ground has, in a paler camaïeu or in various enamels, full-faced masks with pear-shaped heads, terminated below by a beard widened into acanthus leaves, which expand and mix themselves with elegant scrolls. At a later date the style of Faenza majolica assimilates closely to that of Urbino, decorative work being cast aside for pictorial design. Faenza ware is

frequently signed at full length, FATO IN FAVENZA, or sometimes IN FAENZA, 1561, or with the name of that famous establishment, the Casa Pirotta.

The great name of Bernard Palissy has invested the history of French pottery with a halo of romance; but his extraordinary life and peculiar style of work are too well known to need recapitulation. There is high dispute among crockery maniacs of the highest grade as to whether the famous cup, which inspired the glass-painter with the ambition to pursue a nobler calling, was of Italian work or the product of the famous French potteries already established at Oiron; but, after all, this is of small moment, as in his own work he imitated neither the one nor the other, but, like a true genius as he was, founded a style for himself—now rendered too familiar by modern reproductions to need description. The Palissy ware is sometimes graven with a monogram of B and P, but it rarely has any mark.

#### ECLIPSES IN CHINA.

FOREIGNERS, and especially foreign missionaries, have done much of late years to unfold to the Chinese the wonders of nature, and to familiarise them with the knowledge attained by their more highly-civilised brethren of the West in all branches of scientific research; and, amongst other means of accomplishing this end, a magazine, printed in Chinese, is published every week in Shanghai under the title of "Wan Kwoh Kung Pau" ("Chinese Globe Magazine"), in which such subjects as the comet of last summer and the transit of Venus were explained in a popular manner. Notwithstanding these efforts to instruct this self-sufficient people—efforts which are worthy of all commendation, and which will, we doubt not, gradually but surely effect the object in view—the vast majority of the enormous population of the empire still remains intensely ignorant in regard to scientific and kindred subjects, and clings affectionately to their old-world traditions and superstitious observances. During the year 1874 their equanimity was constantly disturbed by the occurrence of an unusual number of celestial phenomena; and under these circumstances it will, perhaps, not be uninteresting to our readers if we place before them a brief narrative of some of

the strange customs and ideas of the Chinese in regard to eclipses, comets, &c.

"Throughout Chinese history," says an old writer on China, "the phenomena of nature, such as an eclipse, the appearance of a comet, a vivid meteor, an earthquake, as well as pestilence, excessive rains, drought, locusts, and famine, have been regarded as signifying the displeasure of Heaven, and have induced a real or feigned desire to repent and reform. General pardons have been granted, measures taken to alleviate the distresses of the poor, and imperial proclamations issued, inviting persons to speak pointedly and freely their opinions of what they deemed amiss in the sovereign's conduct." The great sage and philosopher, Confucius, recorded thirty-six eclipses of the sun, most of which have been verified by European astronomers. This fact, however, does not prove that the Chinese understood the science of astronomy in those days, but merely that they were careful observers of celestial phenomena; and it is also useful as proving the authenticity of their historical annals.

The Imperial Almanack, published in the first instance by the Board of Rites at Peking, and afterwards by the various provincial authorities, does not, so far as we are aware, mention beforehand the coming eclipses of the sun and moon; but the imperial astronomers, some time previous to their occurrence, notify the board of the very hour when they may be expected to be visible, and this information is at once transmitted, through the high provincial officers, to all the subordinate officials throughout the empire, whose duty it is to "save the sun and the moon" from being devoured by some celestial monster; for the Chinese nation at large has no definite notion of the actual cause of eclipses, as may be inferred from the terms by which they denote them, viz., "jih-shih" and "yüeh-shih," literally meaning an eating of the sun and moon respectively. The agent in the matter is usually thought to be the omnivorous dragon; but some believe that there is a dog chained up in the sky, who, when he can get loose, sets off to eat the moon! These absurdities are bad enough, but a well-educated Malay writer, who was an acute and intelligent observer of men and things, remarks in his recently published autobiography that "half of the Siamese say that the sun is being married to the moon, but the latter dislikes the junction,

and so runs away, and the sun after her, and, as he snatches her, it becomes dark."

The Chinese view an eclipse with wonder, mingled, to a great extent, with fear and terror, and most of them take some steps to aid the sun or moon, as the case may be, in the hour of need, the principal agents employed being, of course, gongs and gunpowder, without which no ceremonial observance of any kind is complete. The officials at their several *yamens* (official residences), go through a regular set ceremonial on these occasions. They call in the aid of Taoist priests, and an incense-vase and a pair of large candlesticks, containing red candles for luck, are placed on a table in the *hwa-ting*, or audience-hall, but sometimes in the court in front of it. When the eclipse is beginning, the red candles are lighted, and the official enters, dressed in his robes of state. He takes some lighted incense-sticks in both hands, and bows low in front of the table, waving the incense about according to custom before placing it in the vase. He next proceeds to perform the ceremony of "ko-tou" (lit. knock head), kneeling down thrice, and knocking his head nine times on the ground. He then gets up, and huge gongs and drums are beaten to frighten the devouring monster away; and finally the priests march round the table in solemn procession, repeating certain prescribed formulas in a sing-song tone, until the termination of the eclipse.

The officials are, of course, always supposed to be successful in their endeavours to rescue the sun and moon from their perilous position, and the ignorant masses in China fully believe that the happy result is brought about by the ceremonies just described. They have seen the orb more or less obscured, or, as they have it, swallowed up by some monstrous beast, and after a time returning to its former condition, and they are quite satisfied that the deliverance has been effected by their own exertions and those of the officials. We have also heard that on these momentous occasions some of the people beat in their own houses a species of winnowing instrument, made of bamboo splints, in the hope that the din they raise may aid in averting the dire calamity from the sun or moon; and on the occurrence of an eclipse of the latter, sailors on board native junks always beat gongs with very great heartiness and goodwill, and the noise they thus make is suffi-

cient to drive anyone but a Chinaman distracted. We do not for a moment affect to suppose that Chinese officials, generally, actually believe in these absurd customs and mummeries, though they are obliged to observe them in obedience to the behests of their imperial master, and in deference to the superstitious feelings of the populace; for fully two centuries ago the Roman Catholic priests, who were then in high favour at the Court of Peking, taught them the main principles of astronomy, how to foretel eclipses, &c.; and many well-educated Chinese are acquainted, through the medium of translations, with some of our best works on this and cognate subjects.

In times gone by, the errors and ignorance of the Chinese in regard to eclipses have sometimes been made the pretext for offering insane adulation to the Emperor. It is on record that in the twelfth moon of the seventh year of Chên Tsung, of the Sung dynasty (about A.D. 996), an eclipse of the sun, which the astronomers had predicted, did not take place, and that on this occasion the ministers congratulated his Majesty, as if for his sake so unlucky an omen had been dispensed with. Again, Dr. S. Wells Williams, in his "Middle Kingdom," mentions that some clouds having prevented an eclipse from being seen, the courtiers joyfully repaired to the emperor to felicitate him because the heavens, touched by his virtues, had spared him the pain of witnessing the eating of the sun!

If the Chinese view an eclipse with fear, still more are they alarmed at the advent of a comet. "According to their shape and appearance," Sir John Davis tells us, in "The Chinese," "comets are called by the Chinese, broom stars, hairy stars and tail stars, and they are said to point the tail towards the region of whose ruin they are the presage. . . . The Chinese affect to draw presages from the appearance of comets, and here they bring into play their foolish theory of the five colours. If the appearance be red, particular consequences are to follow; if dark, they expect the overthrow of regular government and the success of rebellions, &c." The comet of last summer caused considerable alarm amongst the ignorant, and was by them, in accordance with their superstitious beliefs, connected with the invasion of the island of Formosa by the Japanese. But during the reign of Hsi Tsung of the Tang dynasty (A.D. 865 to 879), a dreadful

phenomenon appeared in the sky to bewilder and terrify the superstitious Celestials, for two falling stars or meteors shot across the heavens with a motion repeatedly intersecting each other's track, the appearance of which was similar to threads interwoven; they appeared of the size of a large bowl, and, adds the native historian, whose account of the occurrence we quote, "the circumstance was regarded as very extraordinary!"

All these little peculiarities and eccentricities of the Chinese, at which we have thus briefly glanced, will doubtless call up a smile to the face of an English reader in this latter half of the nineteenth century, but they are not alone in their superstitious absurdities, as witness the following anecdotes (to go no further afield for examples), which appeared in the columns of a London paper in July, 1873. "During a storm which lately raged around that place, (Clermont in France) the lightning struck the steeple of a chapel in a neighbouring commune, just as four persons were assembled therein to ring the bells in order to drive away the terrible visitor." Again:—"It is on record that in 1852 the Bishop of Malta ordered the church bells to be rung to mitigate the fury of a gale!" Mindful of these and similar superstitious practices prevalent among some classes in our own and other civilized countries, we must look with a lenient and pitying eye on the follies of the Chinese, and hope that the day may not be far distant when, through the aid of the civilising influences now at work amongst them, they will be brought to behold in a more appreciative manner the wonders of the heavens.

## MARIGOLD.

### A ROMANCE IN AN OLD GARDEN.

#### IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

MARIGOLD was sitting in her own little room, sewing busily at a dress which lay across her knees. It was of a pretty light grey woollen material, and, by the evident pains she took with the stitching and folding and gathering, the making of this gown was an important affair. Marigold did not say, even to herself, that it was her wedding dress, yet visions of a figure, not unlike her own, clad in this robe, and standing proudly beside another person who scarcely knew her in such delicate attire, did rise up again and again within her mind while she worked. Glimpses of the same figure, moving about a pretty



home, flitted also across the background of her thoughts; for this would be her holiday dress for many a day to come, and Ulick had almost taken that coveted cottage, in which they two were to be happy for the rest of their lives. As Marigold worked, she thought proudly and tenderly of Ulick's faithfulness and devotion to herself. Once he and she had been equals, but now it was a different state of things, and the rising business clerk might have chosen a wife from among many who looked down on the poor flower-girl. There was scarcely anyone, besides herself and Peter Lally, who knew what Ulick had been some five or six years ago, or of that meeting on the high-road, the recollection of which remained so vividly upon the young man's mind.

"Ah, if I had only pushed myself into some more respectable employment," thought Marigold; "if I had been a clever dressmaker, or a shopwoman, and worn stylish clothes, no one would then ask where I came from, or what right I had to lower a respectable young man by presuming to marry him. As for my poor father's being a gentleman, nobody ever thinks of that, or whether I can write a good hand, or speak English. I am simply a friendless girl, who carries a basket of flowers through the streets, and wears a plain print gown, and a faded shawl. I'm sure I need not care for myself, since Ulick does not care; and many a time he has told me that I was far more of a lady than the girls who make so much fuss about him, with all their fashionable finery. I remember he said to me once:—'How much more becoming is this load of fresh flowers on your head, than that miserable little bonnet covered with artificials, that I have just passed on the road!' I ought to think of that, and be content with myself: only I do hope that his employer won't be angry when he hears of the marriage, and think less of him on account of it!"

The dusk gathered round Marigold as she worked and thought, and the firelight from the cottage kitchen began to gleam redly round the edges of her room door, which stood ajar. In the kitchen, Kate, the cottager's wife, was rocking her baby's cradle; a knock came on the outer door, and Lizzie, a milliner, from the town, came in to pay a visit. Kate received her hospitably, poked the fire, and hung the kettle on; while Marigold, in the inner

darkening room, dropped her sewing, and sat, face between hands, lost in her happy reflections.

Kate and Lizzie, meanwhile, fell to work like true gossips, and discussed the affairs of their acquaintance. It was not long before they arrived at the subject of Ulick, and his intended marriage.

"I believe it's to be very soon," said Kate.

"I don't believe it will ever be," said Lizzie. "I hear more in the town than the birds sing to you about in the country."

"What do you hear?" said Kate, "I like the girl, and I'd be sorry for her disappointment."

"I don't know what you see in her," said Lizzie, "but that's not the question. You'd be sorry for her, and others would be sorry for others they know about. You don't suppose he has no more sweethearts nor one?"

"I don't believe he has," said Kate.

"You were always a simple one," said Lizzie. "I suppose you think it wasn't a toss-up with your own John, whether he'd have you or some other girl?"

"I don't know," said Kate, "I hope you're not frettin' on my account, Lizzie. Some one said lately you were gettin' very thin. I wouldn't like I had anything to do with it."

"Oh, as to that," said Lizzie, tossing her head. "You were welcome to my share of him. I couldn't marry out of my station."

"I never put myself above you, Lizzie."

"And I never put myself so low as you, ma'am, except such as now, when I come out of my way to pay visits to my inferiors. However, if you're talking to that young woman of yours, shortly, you may tell her what I demeaned myself by coming here to make known to you, that her sweetheart has left his situation, and is goin' to England on the spot—which isn't very like marryin', as far as I can see!"

"I don't believe it," said Kate, "even from so great a lady as you've turned out to be, all of a sudden. An' if I was you, Lizzie, I wouldn't make so little o' myself as to stay here any longer."

"I'll stay till I've said my say, an' I'll go when it fits me," said Lizzie, "seein' is believin', and when Ulick is gone, I'll come back an' have my crow over you. Nobody disbelieves in his going, nor wonders at it, but yourself; for it's the only way he can get rid of the girl, after all the talk that's been about it; an' it's not to be doubted that he could do better in England nor marry a tramp of a young

woman, that knocks at people's doors with a lot of flower-pots on her head!"

"I never liked your jealous ways, Lizzie," said Kate, "an' you've gone and wakened the child with them!" The mother lifted the crying baby out of the cradle, and the visitor, seeing that she could no longer hope to claim Kate's attention, marched wrathfully out of the cottage, and shut the door violently behind her.

As Kate bent over the child, she was suddenly hugged from behind by two stronger arms than baby's. Marigold gave her a hearty kiss, and then stood laughing before her.

"I heard it all, Kate, every word of it. Why did you not remember the door was open?"

"I wasn't thinkin' about it at all."

"You're a good kind soul, Kate, and I'll never forget it to you. I didn't know you cared so much about me."

"Why God bless the girl! what would you had me to say? Didn't she put my own John into the same box with your Ulick, an' me as little to be thought of as yourself. It's not true, is it, about his going to England?"

"True! how could it be true? Give me the baby, Kate, for a little, and let me sit with you here and talk. I feel lonely, somehow, to-night, and inclined to be angry at people. But I won't speak ill of your John, nor of anybody else. We'll talk nothing but baby-talk, and watch the sparks flying up the chimney."

"You're different company from Lizzie, I must say," said Kate, as she seated herself contentedly at the fire, needle in hand, and a torn jacket of John's upon her knee, prepared to take advantage of the unemployed happy moments, to get a necessary piece of work done. Between her stitches she admired her "company," the baby extended luxuriously on Marigold's knees, with rosy baby-toes, spread out to the heat, and wondering baby-eyes, fixed on the beautiful sun-browned face, and golden head, which smiled and dimpled and shone above him; Marigold chattering pleasant nonsense to the child.

The latch was lifted, and Ulick appeared on the threshold.

"Come in, come in!" said Kate, beaming upon him. "It's a late visit you're paying us, but baby an' me are obliged to you all the same. It's a terrible thing that John's gone out, for of course it was to see him that you come," and she dusted a seat for

the guest, twinkling all over with amusement at her own little joke.

"We'll manage to get on without him," said Ulick, taking the seat and showing great interest in the child. His face was flushed, and he seemed possessed by an excitement which he strove to restrain. Now and again he glanced with a peculiar look at Marigold, who sat silent and happy, stroking the baby's little fat legs, and listening to the conversation between her lover and friend.

"We've just been having a visitor," continued Kate, in her bantering way; "an' a visitor that knew more about you nor either Marigold or me did. She told us you're going to England."

Ulick started, and looked very grave. After a few moments' silence, he said, in an altered tone—

"It is true; I am going to England. I came to tell Marigold."

Marigold's hand stopped stroking the baby's legs, and she turned her eyes on Ulick in silent amazement.

"But you have not given up your situation?" cried Kate.

"I have given up my situation," said Ulick.

"Oh, my goodness!" exclaimed Kate. "And you, that was to have been——"

"I want to speak to Marigold, Kate. I must see her alone."

Marigold got up, and, silently putting the child in its mother's arms, led the way into her own little room. There lay the wedding-dress, into which she had stitched her happy thoughts so lately. The distant lights of the town twinkled through the darkness beyond the window; an hour ago she had watched them springing up like so many joys in her future. With the coldness of deadly fear upon her heart, Marigold closed the door, and waited for Ulick to speak.

"Marigold, you must trust me."

The girl drew a deep sigh of relief. The words she had expected to hear were—

"Marigold, we must separate for ever."

"Yes, Ulick."

"That's my brave girl!"

"Tell me more, Ulick."

"I will tell you all I can; but it's a strange affair this that is taking me away."

"I mustn't ask what it is, Ulick?"

"No dear; that's the trouble of it. I have made up my mind that it is better not to tell you."

"Will you come back again, Ulick?"

"I do not know. I may come back—"

that is what I hope for—or I may ask you to come to me. I am strangely, wonderfully uncertain as to the future."

Marigold turned away her head, and looked out on the dreary, shivering lights in the distance. The sudden change from happiness to desolation chilled her. Some confused idea of all she should have to bear with after Ulick had left her, passed across her mind; the taunts of such as Lizzie, the heavy sense of loneliness, the involuntary fears of her own heart.

"Is there no help for it, Ulick?"

"None at all, love. Sit down, and let us talk about it. This has come with as great a shock upon me as upon you. This time last night my head was full of our plans; I thought, going to sleep, of you and our little cottage; but this morning brought me a letter which I think it wiser not to show you. It obliges me to go to England at once, and to remain there some time."

"I did not know you had friends in England," said Marigold.

"I did not know it myself. It seems, now, that I have both friends and enemies, or, at least, there are people who may turn out to be either. It depends upon how things go between them and me, whether I return here or remain in England."

"Which way will it work, Ulick?" asked Marigold, fearfully. "Will the friends or the enemies send you back?"

"The friends would send me back," said Ulick, tossing up his head with an air of pride and triumph. "They will, if they can. But don't you imagine that the enemies are going to cut me into little pieces, or to put me in jail. The worst they can do is to take away from me the wish to return to this place. And, in that case, the world will be wide before me. With you by the hand it does not much matter where I turn my steps."

"And England is such a rich place," said Marigold. "There will be plenty of work to be had."

"Plenty," said Ulick; "I am not afraid. The worst of the whole thing is, that we must part for a time; our marriage is put off, and the future of our lives, though they must be linked together, is uncertain. If you were a different kind of girl, you would take this very badly. But you and I have trusted each other long, and understand each other perfectly."

"You will write to me, Ulick?"

"Constantly. When I cease to write, you may cease to trust; but not till then.

Of course, you must remember, however, that a letter will occasionally miscarry."

Marigold lifted her head and smiled. The worst of this trial seemed already over. Lonely she must be, indeed, for a time; but she would not be desolate or dispirited.

"You know I am an obstinate hoper," she said; "you often told me so. It will take a great deal of your silence to break my heart."

"If you want it broken," said Ulick, "you must get some one else to do it; for I will never try."

There was a silence now which was not heart-breaking, as the lovers sat with clasped hands, looking from each other's faces to those distant lights of the town—stars which shone again with even more than their old lustre, only, now and then, sinking into a wistful glimmer. Marigold was happy, though a period of undoubted pain lay before her. It is such an exquisite pleasure to an honest woman to be supremely trusted by one she loves.

After a time, Ulick spoke again.

"Marigold, I must ask you for those little old relics of my mother, which I gave you to keep for me. I must not leave them behind me."

He said this with a certain difficulty, as if he felt that such a request might sound strangely; but Marigold found nothing odd in his desire to take these treasures out of her keeping. It was a beautiful thought of his, she felt, to wish to have them with him. She went to a corner of her room, unlocked her little box, and brought forth a package, which she placed in Ulick's hands.

"They are all there," she said; "the letters, the locket, and the little bag of odds and ends. Open them, and see if they are right."

The packet was untied, and the contents laid in Marigold's lap. There were a few faded letters tied up with a ribbon, a small bag of tarnished silk and velvet containing some little trinkets and trifles, a locket enclosing hair and initials, and the miniature of a man. Marigold fetched a light, and held it close while Ulick examined these treasures anxiously, before sealing them up once more in a packet, and placing them in his breast.

After this there were many more words to be said, and then came the parting. Marigold went with Ulick to the cottage door, and watched him as long as his figure was discernible in the night. Ulick became only a black streak, and at last

vanished; and the lights on the horizon grew dim again, and Marigold's heart felt such a dead weight within her that she had to stop a little while outside the threshold, to get her thoughts right again, before returning to Kate's fireside. There she must return and talk about Ulick, or Kate would believe he had really deserted her.

The baby was asleep again, and Kate was busy at her patching. Marigold drew a stool to the fire and sat down, trying not to shiver, and spreading out her cold hands to the blaze.

"And so he's really goin' to England?" said Kate in a tone of wonderment.

"He sets out to-morrow morning early," said Marigold.

"Dear, dear! To think of that Lizzie being right after all. I'm as sorry as can be, if it's only on account of her crowin'."

"She's not right in all she said though, Kate," said Marigold smiling. "He is not going away to get rid of me, but upon business of his own that cannot be avoided."

"Of course I know that," said Kate; "and you do speak so nicely that it makes a person quite sure to hear you. I wish I could remember, 'business of his own that cannot be avoided.' I'll say the words to them when they come to me with their gossip."

"I wonder what makes the world so unkind, Kate," said Marigold, a little bitterly. "I never did those girls any harm. They have always been better off in a sort of way than I have been. I never grudged them their fashionable clothes, nor their better employment, nor their good fathers and mothers, nor their lovers. I have always had little enough, Heaven knows. One only great blessing was sent to me, and that seems to make them dislike me."

"Heart alive!" said Kate; "don't you see the meanin' o' the whole of it. They're all strivin' to be ladies, an' not one o' them can manage it. If you were in rags, the lady's in you, and it shines out o' you before their eyes. The beautiful language comes off your tongue as natural as the flower comes on the bush, an' sich quality ways is hurtful to them that has envious hearts. But don't speak as if a handful of wasps was the whole world around you. We're not all o' one temper."

"No, no, Kate; I never meant to say it. You're not the only one I know who stands by me. Don't give me up now;

for I shall have a pretty bad time, I think, until Ulick comes back."

As Marigold sat there by the fire, though she did not realise all the sorrow of the future, yet a heavy foreshadowing of trouble was upon her. She felt lonely, with that peculiar pain of loneliness which parting leaves behind, when time and place of future meeting are uncertain. For five years—ever since the period when childhood's thoughtlessness had begun to leave her—the nearness of Ulick, with all its protecting influence, had been a vivid reality of her life. To be left alone now, so suddenly, within an hour; obliged to sit down and realise the idea of great distance which had never occurred to her before; to feel utterly incapable of forming any picture in her mind of Ulick in an unknown place with unknown surroundings; above all, to think of a great unseen, unimaginable ocean, which possibly must be crossed by her before they could meet again, under new circumstances and in strange scenes; all this scared, chilled, and oppressed her. Fortunately for her, her life was too active to admit of her long abandoning herself to absorbing reflection. She bade Kate a cheerful good-night, folded up the pretty wedding-dress and laid it away, with neither sighs nor tears, but only some sprigs of lavender among its folds; and, in the end, fell asleep with a heart full of prayer and hope.

Ulick in the meantime went his way, his heart beating so thick and high with strange excitement that he scarcely felt the pang which, a week ago, he should have suffered at the thought of leaving Marigold. The feverish spirit which he had controlled while in her presence seized upon him now, and carried him on his way as if swept along by a wind. His mind was crowded with conflicting hopes and fears—such hopes and such fears as beset the soul of a man when he sees a prize of ambition before him, which seems placed within his grasp, but may yet be missed and lost.

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